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CO, Army Liaison Office, PIC

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CH/PIC/MSD

Review of TM00-000, Soviet Tanks and Self Propelled Guns

1. Our review of the Army key to Soviet Tanks and Self-Propelled Guns may be divided under two headings: format and substantive information.

2. Format. We feel that the format used is an adaptation of that used in the Air Force key series and therefore perpetuates some undesirable features of the Air Force publications. The most undesirable feature, a factor readily admitted by the Air Force, is the poor photographic quality obtained by copying paper prints and then reproducing them by the photolith process. This practice has meant that a large percentage of the images needed in photo interpretation becomes invisible when printed. In a day when rapid strides are being made in improving reproduction methods and when operational PI's are using smaller and smaller scales of higher and higher quality, it is difficult to understand why the use of a low quality medium, even for part of a publication, should be continued. We would recommend that instead of making the preliminary layout with paper prints that it be made in positive film form, using film electronically dodged to uniform densities. This would be only one generation away from the original negative. From the positive layout a copy negative would be made which would form the master neg, two generations from the original. Then photographic pages in either film-positive or paper form could be made for publication. We strongly favor film-positive pages in a loose-leaf binder. These pages can then be removed and examined over a light table, for the viewing of fine detail.

3. It is also felt that it would be a mistake for the Army to adopt the bulky 10x14 inch size of the Air Force manuals. Army PI's so frequently operate in tactical situations that they need an easily carried handbook, of not more than 8x10 inch size.

4. Substantive Information. The table of scale discernibility on page 2.04 is so conservative as to be completely erroneous. The writer apparently overlooks the vast improvement in film quality and viewing equipment since WWII.

5. In the recognition of military equipment the use of characteristic shadows is usually very helpful. This key does not go into this subject.

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6. It would be very helpful to have an index of the mission and exposure numbers of the vertical photographs used. This manual will probably be used frequently as a classroom textbook, and the instructor will want to distribute contact prints for use by his students. Without an index the instructor cannot recover these prints.

Distribution:

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